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LOS ANGELES

The Dream of Youth.

A POEM.

G. WOODFALL, PRINTER,
ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

The Dream of Youth.

A POEM.

“ Hlas Sorrow thy young days shaded,
As clouds o’er the morning fleet?
Too fast have those young days faded,
Which even in sorrow were sweet?
Does Time with his cold wing wither
Each feeling that once was dear?
Come, child of Misfortune, come hither,
I’ll weep with thee tear for tear.”

MOORE.

LONDON :

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STRAND.

1818.

TO
WALTER FREDERIC STIRLING, ESQ.

This Poem
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY
HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.



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The Dream of Youth.

The Dream of Youth.

CANTO I.

But they who have loved the fondest, the purest,
Too often have wept o'er the dream they believ'd ;
And the heart that has slumbered in friendship securest
Is happy indeed if 'twas never deceiv'd.

MOORE.

I.

“ O’ER years of youth the tearful eye may cast its
aching glance,
When joys no longer thrill the heart, and hopes no
more entrance ;
’Tis but the gloomy waste of life, the desert’s dreary
path,
That wakes within the breast again each former
tempest’s wrath.

II.

It tells but of some early hope that passion taught to
glow—
Some gleam of infant innocence the heart just learnt
to know—
Then plunged into the precipice, where whirled the
gulf of crime,
And darkly seared the furrowed brow in youth's own
joyous prime.

III.

The world may fling its loud reproach :—but can it
wound so deep,
As the gnawing fiend of Memory, whose tortures never
sleep?
In lonely darkness undisturbed, the heart must ever
brood,
Remorse must be its clinging curse, despair its only
food.

IV.

Yet once to Joy's exulting strain the heart could
proudly swell,
And it hath wept in trancing thought o'er Love's
impassioned spell ;
But, like each earthly privilege, it proved a phantom—
shade,
A meteor light of mocking glare, that glimmer'd—
fled—betrayed !

V.

And what hath life to offer more?—oh, yes ! perhaps
for me,
When tears have washed each guilty thought, these
aching eyes may see
Some beckoning form of future bliss, some soothing
heart to heal
These bleeding wounds, and wake those joys, which
long I've ceased to feel."

I.

—And is this then the strain, that truth hath wrung
 From the racked breast?—has all, that hope and
 thought
 Fantastically framed in days yet young,
 Ended in this?—all that experience taught,
 To look on life, as 'twere a vision, caught
 From the frail rainbow tints, that smile
 In such auspicious loveliness, as fraught
 With hues, which promise peace—then fade the while,
 E'en while we gaze on what we deem will aye beguile.

II.

Man's heritage is sorrow—ere we know
 Ev'n our own mother's voice, we learn to share
 In this our common lot—and tears will flow
 E'er we can lisp of grief—and who shall dare
 To deem his life will end not in despair? '
 All—all be crushed—the hope that fondly stayed,
 Like the last beam of day, amid our care,
 Too fair, too frail, in sadness be decayed,
 And all that once gave life be mouldering in the shade.

III.

Alas ! we mock ourselves—the easy prey
Of our own hearts, that like a fretful boy
Can only weep itself to rest—from day to day
We prove our heirdom e'en in all our joy,
Which by its own reaction must destroy
All its gay promise, turning bliss to pain :
Tired of its dream, the heart will quickly cloy,
And eyes can only wake and weep in vain,
Or weeping ask of Heaven to sleep and—dream again!²

IV.

Yet it is sad for youthful hearts to crush
Their native feeling—bid each passion sleep,
That it tell not of woe—and learn to hush
The rising sigh, lest Love should hear, and weep :
And while each smile but plants the furrow deep
On the scathed brow, to tell of joys unknown,
And hopes unfelt—with venial fraud to heap
Tale upon tale of gladness, while the groan
Of smothered woe but waits to brood and burst alone.

V.

Yet if at times some brighter hope should win
A truant smile, and foolish fancy dream
Of pangs rewarded, and atoned sin :—
Blame not the thought—'tis but a lonely beam,
That tints existence with a dearer gleam :
And, through the stormy wreck of early years,
Oh ! 'tis a dear illusion still to deem
Of days unsullied by Affliction's tears,
When Fancy half believes that Truth her vision rears.

I.

“ Nay ! let me dream—'tis hard to wake
From slumbers so divine as this :
Perhaps Life's visions yet may take
Some tint of early bliss :
Like clouds that lie
On a western sky,
Too frail to stay—yet oh ! too fair to die.

II.

Delusion here may kindly throw
Her veil around the past alone :
And all the brightening future glow
With visions still her own :
Joy still may shine—
In dreams be mine—
And Love may worship at his wonted shrine.

III.

Is it for me that well known smile
Again plays dimpling o'er her cheek ?
Is it that pride forgets the while—
For me those blushes speak ?
Oh ! let me dream !
Too soon the gleam
Must haste to vanish with the morning beam.

IV.

Is it for me that downcast eye
Shrinks from the ardent gaze it meets ?
Is it for me that smother'd sigh
Its tenderness repeats ?

Oh Vision stay !
Oh yet delay !
Too soon must memory burst with hated day.

V.

Then chide not, if, by Fancy's spell,
I fondly dream of wrongs forgiven—
Is it too much for Hope to dwell
A few, few hours in Heaven?
The heart must wake—
The spell must break—
And Fancy all her revels soon forsake."

VI.

For Hope can twine around the youthful heart,
And cling, till Fancy almost feels it true ;
Yet the gay vision will too soon depart,
And into darkness melt each iris hue,
With which imagination did imbue
Its form of loveliness. Time never heals
The wound, it only festers. Mem'ry too !
Vainly we learn to smile—Silence reveals,
What Hope in vain depicts, and Memory more than feels—

VII.

Oh Memory ! too like the moon-beam's light
On yonder sepulchre, whose rays but shine
On the cold dead—thou art as palely bright !
The Moon's beam only points to death—and thine
Plays mournfully o'er the desolate shrine
Of ruined Hope—yet wakes no spirit there—
And though thy moral tells us to resign
All—all we love—Pity will yet forbear
To blame the foolish heart that weeps o'er such despair.

VIII.

O'er the bright track of youth to throw the gaze,
When age hath dimmed the lustre of our eye,
Is but the lightning's flash—the comet's blaze—
Scarcely seen in splendour, ere 'tis seen to die :
And thus the brilliance of Hope's early dye,
When all of life bloomed lovely, and the heart
Sketched its own dreams, like stars along the sky
That shoot, then lose their lustre, will impart
A brief bright gleam of bliss to make remembrance start.

IX.

To clasp the image that it once had loved,
And own that feeling ne'er can all grow old.
Alas ! how soon the fairy scene removed,
When maddening truths their sullen forms unfold ;
Woe after woe in sad array enrolled,
And hope protracted to its faintest beat,
Till the dimmed eye can scarce one gleam behold
O'er the whole page of life, where still deceit
Must e'en its tale prolong, and all its dreams repeat.

I.

“ Tho' fled are the days, when to Fancy alone
This heart loved to whisper its earliest prayer ;
When it sketched in its brightness some world of its own,
And Hope, like a pilgrim, went worshipping there ;
When Affection would twine
At its own hallowed shrine,
'The flowers that but blossomed in heavenly air.

II.

Yet still 'mid the ruins shall Memory dwell,
In fondness again still its orisons raise ;
Like a hermit in love with his leaf-covered cell :
And tho' dimmed be the lustre of Life's early days,
Still the soul shall renew
All its own verdant hue,
And the lips again falter their accents of praise."

X.

But who is he, The Childe, thus deeply scarred
In suffering—alas ! not he alone
Tells a sad tale of life and fortune marred.
All have their sorrows—and perhaps his own,
Whate'er they were, were less, had not the tone
Of his own spirit mingled gall within
His cup of bliss—no matter—he hath known,
What he would not unlearn—tho' it might bring
A few short hours of calm to steal amid life's din.

XI.

Experience now can tell a truer tale—
Can long for Apathy's dull niggard state,
Reckless, if love desert, or friendship fail—
And smiling e'en amid the storms of fate :
That heartless caution, colder e'en than hate,
Which scoffs at pity for another's woe—
That feeling, so akin to desolate,
Which looks too calm for love on all below,
Are the best, safest substitutes for passion's glow.

XII.

Ask ye his lineage?—what recks man's birth?
Mighty or low, 'twill end but in the same ;
All, all are children of the same vile earth,
Where ends the peasant's toil, or hero's fame?
What is its sum? a nothing, or a name.
Toil, grandeur, toil; proud wealth encrease thy store,
Heap the vile dust, that mingles with thy frame
From kindred earth—heap on, 'till all is o'er—
Then weigh thy sum of gains—mere nothingness—no
more !

XIII.

Haply for him some distant day may shed
Its balm for all that youth hath learnt of woe ;
Or when, at last, at peace among the dead,
What boots the colour of this scene below ?
Let the winds whistle, or the tempest blow—
The grave will shelter—nor the heart once swell
At all that it hath known of friend or foe.
Alas ! and is this all ? is one dark cell
The last sad bourne, where all Life's passions dwell,

XIV.

Where the rich fervour of Life's early dreams,
And all the fond reality of bliss
Must darkly sleep—where all that seemed and seems
The toil or joy of life, in one abyss
Must sink unconscious—where Hate must kiss
The earth with him he hated—Love e'en press
The thankless clod that answers not to this
Most clinging clasp—and the heart, passionless,
Feel not one throb for all it once had loved to bless

XV.

Yet who in torpid childhood's dull estate³
Manhood's rich buoyancy would wish to blend ?
Manhood has woes—yet we ourselves create
All that we feel : life, whether foe or friend,
Is our own action, and we can defend
Ev'n our own suffering, while childhood's way,
Pure without merit, joyous without end,
Takes but from ignorance each hour's display,
And negatively knows the whole of life's array.

XVI.

“ Onward ! ” 's the motto of our life and will,
The watchword of our birthright—tho' the tide,
That rolls us onwards, lead too oft to ill :
Where is the dastard, who dare not abide
The stormy billow, that, in threatening pride,
May dash him on to suffering—or to fame ?
Who, when at last, each scene of life is tried,
Whines for the spotlessness of childhood's name.
And scoffs at Pleasure's cup, when lees alone remain.

XVII.

No ! though the brand be shiver'd in our grasp,⁴
And the foe press to drive us to despair,
The broken hilt we still will sternly clasp,
“ Hopeless, not heartless,” still the combat dare.
“ Fight on” the rallying word—and where, oh ! where
Shall the heart own a call more proudly grand
In the stern tug of war and life, to share
In such a battle shout—and nobly stand,
Till glory crown the day—or die with blade in hand.

XVIII.

Alas ! tho' scarcely twice ten years had rolled
In stealthy progress o'er Childe Arthur's brow,
Boyhood has pains, and youth can cares unfold,
Which age would wreck, and manhood force to bow.
Dark child of Misery !—not once, as now,
Did Pleasure fill her flowing cup in vain,
Or Love allure in confidence—but thou
Hast found the flowery band a galling chain—
Friendship and Love ! what are ye ? a vision and a pain !

“ Oh Love is like the falling dew
On flowers at early morn,
When dancing sun-beams fling their hue
In spangles o’er the lawn :
Th’ unfolding petals drink each ray,
And wanton to the air,
Ah ! short indeed their vernal day,
But love is shorter far !

So youthful hearts expand in joys,
Hope’s gale plays lightly by ;
But soon a chilling frost destroys,
And leaves the wretch to die :
For what is joy but dew of morn,
Or transient track on whitened lawn,
Or blush on Beauty’s cheek that glows ?
And love is like the swallow’s stay,
That wantons in the summer’s ray,
But flies from wintry snows ;
Yet tho’ on earth a prey to fears,
Or slightly dimmed with April tears ;
Its amaranth bloom shall dwell on high.
And mingle with eternity !

For life is but a pageant's dream,
The bow that spans the skies ;
'Tis but the night-star's fading beam,
That flashes ere it dies :
But soon the empty dream is flown,
And Memory wakes again ;
The rose of happiness is gone,
Its thorns alone remain :
And tho' the brilliant star to-night
May deck the azure heaven,
To-morrow's eve may need its light,
Afar by tempests driven.
Thus Love and Joy awhile may sway
O'er Life's eventful cloud—
Yet ever sinks the brightest day
In Night's oblivious shroud.

So slight the veil 'twixt Joy and Sorrow,
That Hope a charm can scarcely borrow,
How life its pangs may brook :
Since Memory's knife too deeply prints
Of what *hath been* the blood-red tints,
How friends betrayed and love forsook !

But let that pass—the hour is gone
When the blow came—may years atone
For the wild thought—the lifted hand
Shrunk from its impious lord's command,
And life may linger, as it will,
Till the grave close this scene of ill.

Yet Hope is like that songster's spell,
Which charms the ear at dusk of eve,
The lonely warbler in the dell,
When all the rest the woodlands leave :
So Love may shrink and Friendship feign,
And Fortune crush our dreams so fair,
Hope's "wood notes wild" will still remain,
The lonely warbler mid our care."

XIX.

Friendship miscalled ! why hath a fond world named
Thy light the star, that sanctifies e'en woe :
Meteor of mockery ! why art thou proclaimed,
As the rich balm for all life's ills below :
The Childe once wooed thee too—he sought to know
All thy proud boast of bliss—and he essayed,
And thought to gain himself a friend—yet no !
Thy light but mocked him—to delude it played—
First wooed him into errors—shared them—then
betrayed.

XX.

Here let me throw aside the ill-feigned name,
That seems to tell of fabled woe. I speak
Of mine own wrongs—and with deserved fame,
(Fame may and can be damning) I would seek
To brand the heart, that urged its selfish pique
In Judas' treachery—e'en while he smil'd and seem'd
To talk, God save him ! of his deep-fetch'd grief,
That his own snares had caught—and he had deemed
T'have played the atoning part, e'en while of wrong he
dream'd.

XXI.

Scandal, like death, has too its thousand ways^s
To torture and to ruin—from the sneer
That scarcely curls its lip, yet half displays
The passion it would seem to hide—the leer,
That scoffs obliquely—the cold, skulking fear,
That weaves its web in secret—the false smile,
That flatters, while it damns—the falser tear,
That o'er a brother's failing weeps the while—
And the half shrug, that hints, where language would
defile.

XXII.

Out on such dastard foes ! better to see
The hand upraised to hurl the dart, and sink
At once beneath the blow ; than try to flee
From the base combat, where in vain we shrink
From the foul poisonous tale, that, link by link,
Severs our name from all that life deems fair,
And beautiful—and drives to Ruin's brink
With malice calm—till e'en good men forbear,
And weep, where they would save ! Alas ! they leave,
Despair.

XXIII.

Friend of my soul no more !⁶ thy hands have rased
Ev'n thy own temple's building—and the shrine,
Which Love in sweetest tenderness had raised,
Where Hope would keep her vigils, and would twine
Flowers of the fairest hue—alas ! the ruin's thine—
This too thou hast not spared ! And now survey
The wreck that thou hast made—gaze not on mine—
But hers, thy young, noble and innocent prey—
The smile will not desert—but the heart wears away.⁷

XXIV.

Alas ! for her and me ! life's waters flow
As calmly as before—but who can tell
Of all that struggles in the depths below ?
Farewell ! thou best of beings ! though the spell
Of sadness hath been on thee, fare thee well.
Time might have told the truth—the calumny
Been hushed—alas farewell ! Let my name dwell
In kindness in thy bosom—thine shall be
As a sweet mournful vision of the past to me.

I.

“Hast thou e’er felt the sorrow,
When lamenting loves part,
When e’en Hope cannot borrow
One solace for the heart ;
And when all that gives gladness,
Is to feel we shall meet
Where the eye knows not sadness,
And Friendship no deceit.

II.

Tho’ life may be protracted,
Till the withered heart smile ;
And the pangs, which distracted,
Lie slumbering awhile :—
Yet ’tis but like the madness,
Which hugs its clanking chain,
And smiles as if in gladness
On the fetters of his pain.”

XXV.

There is a strange perversion in man's grief—
And it may be a madness—dotage—or
Wisdom, which bids the sufferer seek relief
In playing with the dagger, which does mar,
And lacerate his heart, in the strong war
And chaos of his mind, like the maniac
Dandling the figure that had quenched the star
Of reason : So close is Joy to Sorrow's track,
Alas ! they seem the same, as the eye wanders back.

XXVI.

They are, alas ! twin-sisters—and the heart
That woos, must win them both—so close allied
In feature and in love, they seldom part,
But closely cling o'er life's tempestuous tide :
Joy in her brightest hour of royal pride
Will sigh and turn aside to weep—and tears,
Which in their course of sorrow softly glide,
Have brightened to a smile—as though its fears
Were blended into joy, which more and more endears.

XXVII.

The blushing maid upon her bridal morn⁸
Will weeping sink into her lover's arms—
Ah ! never yet did costly gem adorn,
Like that bright tear, that glitters, as it charms—
Yet 'tis not grief—Love's timid fond alarms,
That breathe no doubt, yet tremble, as they rise—
The throbbing pulse, that Reason vainly calms—
The fluttering heart, that almost melts to sighs—
These bring thy tears, O Joy—Love's sweetest, dearest
prize !

XXVIII.

Too long the heart hath wooed its mournful themes,
Too long hath slumbered in oblivious gloom,
Nor known of pleasure but in airy dreams,
That cheat, yet sooth not—like the hectic bloom
Of deep consumption, ere the insatiate tomb
Grasps its young victim, and the smile of Hope
Again plays dimpling—Love's most sweet perfume
Sheds its rich incense, and the mind's gay scope
Expands in fullest pride, and dares with fate to cope.

I.

“ What ! though Fate looks so lowring and gloomily
now,
'Tis the cloud that but darkens the fair Summer's
day ;
And the frown that now riots unscared on my brow,
At the bright gleam of hope shall fade quickly
away.
Shall the bloom of our youth be but sullied by cares,
While the future can furnish one smile of repose ?
Shall the lines in our cheeks shew the channels of tears,
Or the pale flower of woe hope to banish the rose ?
Oh no ! while a friend or a glass but remains,
'Tis Wisdom that bids us thus hallow life's pains,—
And the lips that would sullenly put the cup by,
May feast on a frown, while they sip from a sigh.

II.

Should the girl I adore prove a trait'ress to me,
And vow that Jove laughs at those loves that betray :
Why, I'll join with his godship, and bid her be free ;
Then fly off with the bee to sip sweets where I may ,

Her eyes may be bright, but sure Mary may vie
With the brightest, that Fanny e'er fancied her own;
And this head can be pillowed as soft, when I lie
On a breast that's as fair as e'en Fanny hath known.
Then let the winds whistle—the tempest that roars,
Shall chaunt but the prelude to happier hours;
And in haven so safe as the bosom of love,
Oh! 'twere transport to scoff at the tempest above!"

XXIX.

Thus would Childe Arthur sing, although he knew
That it was but in mockery of ill:
And that, howe'er he trifled, still too true
Came the sad memory, which did instil
Its poison into all of life—whose thrill
Was but as madness—and, like a vampire,
Fed on the grave of love—and doth feed still—
And tho' perhaps at times he strung his lyre
To joy, to what for solace will not grief aspire?

XXX.

And Grief, when lone, would sometimes sit and
 sketch

A phantasy so beautiful, 'twould seem
Ev'n as a well-loved form—and Hope would stretch
Her gladdened vision, till the fairy dream
Half caught the tints of Truth's reflected beam—
But when it vanished—then he madly rushed,
Where pleasure sparkled in oblivious gleam,—
Alas ! too soon the voice of reason hushed—

When the heart learnt to smile, where once the cheek
 had blushed.

XXXI.

Let us plunge deep in revelry—fill high
The goblet to its brim—and pledge the bowl
To its full tide of madness, till the eye
Flash with unhallowed lustre, and the soul,
Delirious with the draught, lose all controul,
And give its loose to joy ;—Is there no morrow
To bid us 'gain return to Reason's goal,
When all that memory from the past can borrow,
Is but redoubled loathing, shame, disgust and sorrow ?

XXXII.

What is the sum of revelry ? To quaff
A few brief draughts of madness, that arrest
The tide of reason—and the noisy laugh,
That scarcely tells of mirth—the empty breast,
Which heavily toils for the vapid jest,
“ That palters with us in a double sense,”—
Losing our manhood’s pride—our bosom’s rest—
All that ennobles life—the throb intense
Of rapture—and the young rich bloom of innocence.

XXXIII.

In costliest goblets quaff the sparkling wine,
Rove thro’ the labyrinth of Pleasure’s doom :
Dull ’neath the borrowed splendours of the mine,
See Fashion’s myriads throng the midnight room :
Tho’ smiles be taught to play—tho’ purchased bloom
Its heightened flushings on the cheek bestow,
The sun may shine—but can it warm the tomb ?
Or roses hide the rotting death below,
Or bid from Misery’s eye the tear less frequent flow ?

XXXIV.

Yet the Childe lingered in the scene—too weak
To break the spell, or too indifferent,
Where for a time a refuge he might seek
From his own thoughts—what tho' perhaps he leant
Too strongly on this staff—tho' his intent
To gain oblivion, led too oft to ill,
Where is the spirit, so with sorrow rent,
Would dash the cup aside, that gave at will
Forgetfulness?—No, he would drink in madness still.

XXXV.

And there were laughing eyes, which sometimes
 wooed
His spirit to a softness. Beauty's eye
Whene'er it played upon his wayward mood,
Was as the tone of some faint melody,
Waking a dream of happy times, gone by—
But though he joyed to linger in the beam,
And pour'd in listening ears his softest sigh,
'Twas but as sunset on a wintry stream,
That still reflects the ray, but feels no living gleam.

XXXVI.

Yet still to gaze upon Love's sweetest dyes,
The eye's half flash,—and the cheek's tell-tale blush,
Blending all Beauty's richest harmonies,
From the faint tint of Hope to Passion's flush,
When the o'erpowering ecstasy will gush
Thro' the whole frame, and cannot be controlled,
Oh ! it were sweet, if lasting !—but we rush
Back to this earth's recoil, and thus unfold
Our nature's weakness clogged with its terrestrial
mould.

XXXVII.

But let that be—'twas still the Childe's dear bliss
To bask in Beauty's smile, though it should fade—
To aim at Pleasure's mark—though he should miss
The boon he sought, or find too soon decayed :
Ah where was yet the flower so sweet arrayed
In fairest hues, that did not soonest pine ?
Where was the dearest hope, that life display'd,
That perished not ? Yet still at Woman's shrine,
Who would not offer prayers, tho' the fane must de-
cline ?

I.

“ Tho’ dark and drear the day hath been,
And clouds have dimmed the fairy scene,
Which Morning gave to view :
Though all that now remains to life,
Be toil and woe, and pain and strife,
And grief of every hue :

II.

Yet still amid the desert wild
One pitying beam hath fondly smiled,
As if to gild decline—
A smile that round Hope’s death-bed plays,
One truant smile of better days,
Expiring, though it shine.

III.

And that was thine ! When friends fled far,
And Fortune waged her adverse war,
With Malice on her side :
Thy gentle love unfading stayed,
Thy fond affection well repaid
The tempest’s angry tide.

IV.

When Envy's shaft her venom flung,
And Malice poison'd every tongue
 To wound my youthful fame ;
Thy love alone could ne'er deceive,—
Thy heart alone could ne'er believe
 The tidings of my shame.

V.

Yet thou art gone !—I saw thee pine—
I gazed upon that lovely shrine,
 Till all of life was o'er ;
But though thou left'st me with a smile,
And bad'st me strive with grief awhile,
 I only weep the more !”

XXXVIII.

Oh Man ! thou seeming paradox ! whose tears
And smiles, like April showers, so quick succeed !
Scarce ere the burst of sorrow disappears,
Smiles again bloom—and yet again recede—
Alas ! o'er wither'd hopes the heart may bleed,
And inly worship sorrow ; yet the eye
Will sparkle once again, as though the meed
Of happiness were won—but though we try
To hide the pang, that preys—the heart can never lie :

XXXIX.

The truth will linger there—oh ! would it make
Wings to itself, and flee away, we then
Might be at rest ! Alas ! life may forsake,
But Lethe's draught, though doubled, ne'er again
Can banish Misery from her own dark den,
The human heart—yet Arthur vainly smiled,
In guise of joy, as though he scorned that men
Should mock his grief—and once in moment wild
He strung his lyre long mute, to love soon reconciled.

I.

“ Nay ! blame not the heart, that in carelessness roves⁹
To sip, where each flower will afford a repast ;
And as fondly will vow to each fair that he loves,
That each love will be constant and true as the last :
Oh ! ’twere chilling to stay e’en in sunshine alone,—
To bask in *one* beam, be it ever so bright :—
And the heart, whose affections but one beauty own,
Will wish to rove farther to vary delight.

II.

Is the bloom of the rosebud less fragrant and fair,
When it wafts all its odours unheedingly by ?
Is the gale, when its coolness refreshes the air,
Less soft in its whispers, less pure in its sigh ?
Is the voice then that falters affection’s fond tale
To each fair, that will listen, less dear or less kind ?
Oh ! the heart’s like that harp, which is played by the
gale,
And will give sigh for sigh to each moan of the wind.

III.

Does the bee, that so busily roams on the wing
To cull every sweet, that will proffer its bloom,
Does he revel less fond on the beauties of Spring,
Or light on a bud that denies its perfume?
Oh, no! every flow'ret that sighs to the air,
Lends its bloom and its beauty alike to each bee;
And this heart must roam onward to seek from each fair,
Their looks and their smiles to beam kindly on me!"

XL.

'Twas a wild strain—for the Childe thought not so—
What tho' for him no jocund home should bloom,
And his hard fate compel him to forego
All that his heart was framed to love—his doom
The fevered riot, or the sadder gloom
Of Solitude—Oh! there is yet one Love,
That fades not e'en on earth, and will resume
Its task of happiness in realms above,
And sanctify the bliss, which men with angels prove!

XLI.

Oh ! there are hours, when truth hath flashed so
 bright,
We instant felt its ray, which mildly shed
Its holy balm, like visitant of light,
Bidding us turn from all that Pleasure spread
In false allurements round us—and hath led
Our thoughts to better things, when heavenly peace
Hath poured its gentlest slumbers o'er our head,
When Life's mean phantoms for a moment cease,
And upon Virtue's bloom we fondly hope to seize.

XLII.

In vain we toil for happiness—the heart
Is its sole resting-place ; and, like the dove,
'Twill wander, till it find a verdant part
To rest its weary wing—And will not Love,
Plighted on earth, and sanctified above,
The truant wanderer in his flight arrest ?
Where, where on earth shall bliss its birthright prove,
If not in Love ? where seek to pause and rest ?
Love pure as angels feel, yet still in Woman's breast.

XLIII.

Alas ! the dove may wander far and wide,
But it will rest at length—and oh thrice blest,
Where it shall light ! Ambition, grandeur, pride,
Where are your joys ? hide, hide your haughty crest—
Thy plumes may wave in triumph—but thy breast
Is cold and tenantless. Ah ! how could e'er
In such chill clime Love linger as a guest ?
His home the heart, he seeks his refuge there,
And sheds his brightest halo e'en around despair.

XLIV.

And thou, pure spirit of a brighter sphere,¹³
Though, whilst a habitant on earth, thy doom
Glittered in all that life deems splendid here—
Cradled in majesty ! What though the bloom
Of youth and beauty did thy birth illumine,
Daughter of Britain ! Let us not forget,
'Mid our vain wailings o'er thy early tomb,
Tho' thine were wealth, birth, grandeur, glory—yet
Love was the brightest gem in thy bright coronet.

XLV.

Was it not Love, which led thee to forsake
The gorgeous pageantry of life, and woo
In Claremont's bowers a purer peace, and make
Thyself a feeling, so sublime, so true,
That with thy life still strengthened, as it grew ;
And in thy latest hour of agony
Did not Love reign ? Death's pangs could not
subdue—

Love sparkled even in the dying eye,
And gave thy seraph form reluctant to the sky.

XLVI.

In mercy flew the shaft—Ah ! how could she,
Whose days so calm, so holy, ne'er had known
Aught save Life's innocent festivity :
Whose heart responded only to Love's tone—
How could she bear to see such shrine o'erthrown—
To quit the calm retreat of youthful days,—
The Eden fondly, vainly called her own—
To mingle in the world's obtrusive gaze,
And barter all of peace for a throne's dazzling rays.

XLVII.

Weep on, thou man of grief! the heart may ache—
Yet e'en for thee one pensive joy remains
The world can ne'er despoil—'tis thine, to make
Thy breast the shrine, where her lov'd image reigns
In loneliness of worship :—God ordains,
But man may yet in humble sorrow weep—
What were the heart without its tears? Heav'n deigns
To look with pity on that sorrow deep,
The pang that, though suppressed, yet will not, cannot
sleep,

XLVIII.

Till the last lengthen'd sleep of death—the grave
Hath yet but half its ashes¹—they, who mourn,
Will rest at last with her they could not save.
Ye widowed souls, on earth that vainly yearn
For happiness departed.—Ye, who spurn
At loathed life—rejoice, ye yet shall die !
Your woes, your hearts be mingled in one urn :
While Love renewed shall then exulting cry,
“ Oh Death! where is thy sting? Ob, Grave, thy
victory ?”

XLIX.

Resume we now our theme—'tis Heav'n's decree,
When the bright form of youthful innocence
Untimely sinks to rest—such agony
Might bow the proudest soul to learn from hence,
How drear indeed the task for hope to wrench,
E'en in Life's happiest hour, its dearest stay ;
E'en when in rapture lingers every sense,
Each blessing torn in suddenness away,
And the heart left to mourn its desolated day !

I.

The Childe once too had dreamed of love like this—
And in his happier hours would string his lyre
To strains that only murmured notes of bliss :
What though perhaps he fondly would aspire
To joy this world can never know—far higher
Than our clogged souls can bear—who would
Upbraid the bosom, that would fain respire
In climes more suited to its heavenly mood,
Than pine alone on earth in peopled solitude ?

LI.

The mind itself is clime. Whate'er life be,
Gloomy or gay, 'tis temper tints the hues,
Which colour every scene. Ah ! could we flee,
Where never clashing with the world imbues
Our spirits with its taint,—where slavish crews,
Whose only god is self, can never mar
The sweet imaginings, which Fancy woos,
And makes her own, from Earth's poor hopes afar—
Alas ! fly where we will, we 'scape not Misery's scar.

LII.

By Vaga's banks there is a scene of peace—
A holy calm, that seems serene to brood,
Like halcyon on the waters—one light breeze,
Like the lone spirit of the solitude,
Plays o'er the stream, that curls in gentlest mood :
Glass'd in the tide, each varying image glows,
Rock, turret, spire, wild mountain, waving wood,
Wreath'd in all shapes—now lulled in sweet repose—
Conflicting—blending—mingling now, like mimic fogs

LIII.

Tempe of England !¹² what though classic Greece
Can boast her vale of Beauty, thine may vie,
And proudly vie, with all she tells of peace
And loveliness : here the enamoured eye
May gaze on Nature in her ev'ry dye,
Magnificent or fair—rock ridged on rock,
Wood crowning wood, and here the careless Wye,
Now lounging, listless, like a summer brook,
Now hurrying, foaming on beneath some sudden shock.

LIV.

Here rippling playsome on the pebb'l'd shore,
Like fondling babe upon its mother's breast—
Here swoln to rage, with loud and angry roar
Dashing its headlong stream, in vain repress
By shattered crags, that mock its rage, and rest
Their dusky mass, like giant 'mid the fray :
Then sinks again to peace, like lover blest
In Beauty's arms, and takes its furtive way
Through mead and hanging copse, that blend in close
array.

LV.

Lovely, and lov'd in every change ! whate'er
The form capricious Nature gives, now gay,
And frolicking in smiles, like youthful fair,
Now like some matron's stern commanding sway¹³—
Fantastic now, like elfin at his play
Tossing thy waves in sport—Whate'er thou art,
Thy banks shall woo me still with fond delay,
Young Love once more his brightest arrows dart,
And the frail dreams of youth to life and being start.

LVI.

Launched on thy tide the hardy peasant dares
The rocky stream, that tempts his vent'rous course
In coracle or light caique, that bears
His form, swerveless, erect—and, without force,
Glides o'er the waters, that, with bubbling hoarse,
Sprinkle its tiny ribs, which still repel
The faint assault, secured by hide of horse :
The skilful hind still guides his scallop shell,
And lightly carols on, o'er tide and eddying swell

LVII.

In perilous security¹⁴—now throws
The lengthen'd line, that tempts his finny prey—
Now cautious leans—now sits in stiff repose—
Or, swiftly paddling o'er the spattering spray,
Trolls the long net, whose loaded spoil shall pay
His anxious hopes : and deems the burden light,
When, hastening homeward at the close of day,
His brawny shoulders bear the paltry weight
Of the light lathy skiffs, that well his toils requite.

LVIII.

Hark ! the far halloo from yon oak crown'd hills—
The cheering whoop—the bloodhound's deep ton'd
 bay—
The calling horn—the crowd's wild clamour fills
The valley with their din : Away !—Away !—
The deer is up—he clears the copsewood grey ;
Bounds o'er the mead and scales the mountain's side—
On—on—pursue—the chace brooks no delay—
The deer has gained again the forest wide—
He finds no refuge there—he seeks the faithless tide.

LIX.

Alas ! that plunge was ruin ; jaded, spent,
He vainly stems the stream—on every side
The dastard crowd pursue—thus strongly pent
Within his watery grave, his foes deride
His gasping sobs, and shout in brutal pride ;
E'en the light coracle amid the throng
Pursues its panting victim o'er the tide—
Vain, vain his struggles—vain his efforts strong—
He dies—and the skiff drags the dappl'd fool along.¹⁵

LX.

'Mid scenes like these long time the Childe had stayed ;
Fit theme for meditation Nature's map,
Mortality's sage lesson, best displayed
In the stern havoc, and the widened gap
Of conq'ring time ! Ages have wrapped and wrap
Tow'r, castle, abbey, monuments of pride,
Bulwarks of strength and pow'r in the broad lap
Of desolation—man's poor petty stride,
Where heroes bled before, now treads the desert void,—

LXI.

Or, it may be, where holy monks have made
Their cells the scene of Frolic's wayward deeds,
Each public prayer by private mirth repaid ;
Preferring merry tales to mystic creeds,
Pastime to penance—revelry to beads.¹⁶
Or where Tradition lends her wondrous tale,
(The tale of wonder ever swiftly spreads)
How mantles scared the breasts of ladies frail—
And even made chaste wives themselves at times turn
pale.

LXII.

Cradock¹⁷, thou valiant, yet mistrusting knight,
That doom'd thy spouse to this sad luckless test !
Thou wast, indeed, I ween, presumptuous wight
To scan the secrets of a female breast !
When the robe crack'd and shrunk, and half confess
Some traitor thought—some sly imagining—
Didst thou not wish the tell-tale cloak at rest ?
Husbands, beware—to this one tenet cling—
'That e'en " a little knowledge is a dang'rous thing."

LXIII.

There was a ring, which none but maids could wear¹⁸—
A bashful cup, that once its draught denied
To all but virgin lips—and e'en a chair
Shrunk from the touch impure, ne'er yet belyed :
Thy girdle also, Horimel, would chide
The frail one's secret lapse—but, Cradock, still
Thy robe no future ages shall deride—
Once, once, it prov'd its fearful, honest skill,
Ah could it 'gain revive, and dames not dread the ill !

LXIV.

Away with idle trifling—ill it suits
With the deep solemn mood, which mem'ry flings
O'er all of life—its joys—its vain pursuits—
Its fragile hopes, to which fond Fancy clings,
As though it wooed the sweet imaginings
Of early days—and deemed that love again
Waved o'er our head his purple¹⁹ feathery wings
Alas ! man may in idle semblance feign—
The smile may play again—the scar will yet remain,

LXV.

And it will burst afresh, whene'er the tone
Of recollected joy shall strike the heart
With a forgotten spell—some blessing, flown,
Recall its long lost form—some feature dart
Upon the eye—some name bring back the smart
Of disappointed hope—e'en when we gaze
On loveliest scenes, some pang will rise to thwart
Th' expanding bliss—some weakness yet betrays
The fest'ring mind's disease, which yet reluctant sways.

LXVI.

But it is past—the heart will own again
Its wonted mastery—though foes have frown'd,
The power is left to scorn the malice vain,
And impotent—the mind will yet rebound
Uncrushed, unharmed, while, grovelling on the ground,
Foiled Passion howls—there yet is that within,
Unquenched, undimmed, prophetic, and profound,
Which mounts ascendant 'mid the world's wild din.
Whose hopes, tho' worn, shall yet some voiceless rapture
win.

LXVII.

Lov'd Vaga's banks ! ere yet I part from thee,
Let the eye gaze once more. I owe thee all,
That life, of late, has known of bliss—to me
The minister of Peace, whose gentle thrall
Has won my ling'ring stay—the idle brawl
Of thy wild waves—thy woods, rocks, mountains,
 meads,
Breathe but of joy—and still, where'er ties call,
I'll bear thy memory with me—life recedes,
But still thy scenes shall stay to heal the heart that bleeds.

LXVIII.

'Tis night—yet such a night—it seems as day
Lingered in all its pride—the moon on high
Majestically sails along her way
With not a cloud to dim—rejoicingly,
Like a proud courser—from her azure sky
Smiling in all her brilliance on the stream,
That frets²⁰ with lustre, as it ripples by,
And seems another heaven, liquid in beam,
So like, so beautiful, c'en as Youth's taintless dream.

LXIX.

The woods too gladden in their jewelry
Of living light—and e'en a brilliance pale
Streams on yon lone crag—not a sound floats by,
Save where in distance the lone nightingale
Incessant pours her ever varying wail—
Oh ! sure on such a night, so fair as this,
Seems rent Eternity's thin veil,
Peace seems to woo us with an holier kiss,
And the soul upward springs to dream of heavenly
bliss.

LXX.

And ye, mysterious orbs ! which shine above
In calmest splendour, like far isles of peace,
Havens of rest, and palaces of love !
Ye smile the same, though human woes increase—
Your beckoning beauty bids each passion cease,
That wars on such a night ; and while the eye
Wanders in sadness o'er your living seas
Of holy light, like beacons in the sky,
Pointing to bliss, oh ! how from earth we pant to fly,

LXXI.

And mingle with your loveliness!—Ah! where
In clime more suited to its fond desire
Shall the soul rest? 'Tis but a dream of air,
Yet let it stay unblamed—we must respire
Awhile in this vain earth, till when the fire
Of Passion shall be tempered, and the heart
Forget its tempests—then we may aspire
To rest in such a sphere, fair as thou art,
Star of the morn²¹! from foe and falser friend apart:

LXXII.

Where mortal passions ne'er have rudely been,
Nor Pity scorned an erring brother's woe—
No love to mar—no friends to dim the scene—
No hand in friendship's guise to give the blow
That ruins—no streams of malice flow—
Nor paltrier scandal heap upon the head
Failings, that scarce are faults—Sweet star! not so
Shall e'er such faults with thee be visited,
But holy Peace around its calmest visions shed.

LXXIII.

In sooth, on such a night, 'twere sweet to dream,
How hearts divided may at length forget
The errors that have severed—how the beam,
That shines so brightly o'er thy orb, may yet
Illume each smile, and the heart's deep regret,
By suffering cleansed from all its mortal coil,
Waken to life again, when it has met
All that it deemed its own ; and the spoil,
That Hatred robbed from Life, repay that Life's vain
toil.

LXXIV.

Yet man will mar his happiness—the sport
Of each new system that by turns assails
His reason—or his fancy—each report,
That wildly promulgates fantastic tales,
Warping his belief, and each in turn prevails :
The child of impulse—puppet of caprice,
In easy credence each new faith retails,
That robs us of our dearest dreams of peace.
And only bids the tide of woe and guilt increase.

LXXV.

And art thou then, sweet Star ! another world
Allied to us in suffering—can strife and woe
And toil and guilt and shame and pride have hurled
Thy beauty into ruin ? Can you shew
A wreck so piteous, as this sphere below ?
Are there fond hearts in thee that vainly grieve—
Does silent sorrow 'neath its suffering bow ?—
Alas ! let holy men persuade²²—believe—
My heart shall ne'er of thee such humbling vision weave.

LXXVI.

Thou art too sweet for suff'ring—and thy light
Shines beautiful, as though thy inmates were,
(No age to sere—no sin, no toil to blight—)
E'en as thou art, as bright, as pure, as fair :—
Still to thy orb shall each fond wish repair,
Like lovers to their shrine—howe'er men's skill
May deem thy sphere the sad abode of care,
While the heart lives to throb—or passion thrill—
Ark of my hope ! thou art, thou art my refuge still !

LXXVII.

Here let us part in peace—the melted heart
Has scarce one thought untuned—and to return
To Earth, were but to point afresh the dart,
That tortures, though it kill not—ye, who mourn
O'er the clouds gathering on Life's darkened morn,
Ye will not blame the heart that wooed such spell,—
And ye, who smile, as yet by woe unworn,
Smile on—the tide yet calm, *will* darkly swell—
Ah! that its yawning wave would swallow.—Fare ye well!

END OF CANTO I.

NOTES.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

STANZA II.

¹.....*And who shall dare
To deem his life will end not in despair?*

This is, it is true, no novel doctrine, and college-recollections could accumulate passages from Herodotus, Sophocles, Enripides, and a long *et cætera*, who have made the same humiliating confession.

STANZA III.

² *Or weeping ask of Heaven to sleep and—dream again!*

Thus Caliban in the Tempest :
.....“ And then, in dreaming,
The clouds, methought, would open and shew riches
Ready to drop upon me ; that, when I waked,
I cried to dream again.”

STANZA XV.

³ *Yet who in torpid childhood's dull estate.*

I feel that I am somewhat singular in this disregard of the pleasures of childhood, and that Lord Byron even has joined a host of others in exclaiming,

“ Ah happy years ! once more who would not be a boy ? ”

but it seems to me more of an ill directed sensibility, than a real regret, more a fancied recollection of happiness, than a sincere aspiring after the days of childhood. If absence of sorrow be happiness, childhood has its degree of bliss—but it is such negative enjoyment, so little the result of our own creation, and so little dependent on our own exertions, that I, for one, can neither regret its departure, nor wish for its return. Its innocence indeed contrasted with after-habits may perhaps bid some truant sigh to swell,—but such a contrast can only give a very limited value, as no one can rationally attribute merit to himself, or derive consoling reflections from actions, which spring unconsciously from a mind yet ignorant of pollution, and thoughts which cannot as yet deviate from the regular channels of simplicity. The human mind is very naturally in a state of progression from childhood to the confines of the grave, nor can

it be denominated discontent, that makes the school-boy look forward to the university, and the student to the wider world, as a more brilliant theatre of display. It is the generous aspiration of the soul, and though its course may be impeded, or its current turned aside, the principle is still the same :—"Onward" is the motto—and who, with one spark of divinity within him, would seek to quench the heaven-born flame by returning to the dull torpidity of childhood?

STANZA XVII.

4 No! though the brand be shiver'd in our grasp.

Alluding to the noble arms of a noble family, whose crest is a hand grasping a broken hilt, and the motto beneath is "fight on."

STANZA XXI.

5 Scandal, like Death, has too its thousand ways.

Mille viæ mortis.

STANZA XXIII.

6 Friend of my soul no more!

It is said that a Mexican prince once reproached his perfidious counsellors in these strong, though perhaps

fanciful images. “Ye were the feathers of my wings, and the eyelids of my eyes.” But a greater master in pathos has more feelingly said: “Yea! mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” The language of true pathos is always the language of simplicity. The heart in its real moments of sorrow cannot go out of its way to seek for extraneous images; and I know of no book that contains more beautiful and affecting touches of anguish than the Holy Scriptures—nor any one that more wearies and disgusts us by its laboured griefs, toiling as it were for tears, than Dr. Young’s “Night Thoughts.”

⁷ *The smile will not desert—but the heart wears away.*

How beautifully has Sorrow been described as that cruel disease “which kills so slowly, none dare call it murder!”

STANZA XXVII.

⁸ *The blushing maid upon her bridal morn.*

The Author is in possession of some very sweet lines, supposed to be written by a lady, who shed tears upon her wedding-day: the conclusion of them is so simply

beautiful, that he cannot resist the temptation of transcribing them.

“ And you, to whom I now betroth
In sight of Heaven my nuptial oath,
Who, to bright Truth and Honor joined,
Unite each virtue of the mind,
If my recording bosom draws
One sigh—misconstrue not the cause—
Trust me, though weeping, I rejoice,
And, blushing, glory in my choice.”

STANZA XXXIX.—I.

9 *Nay! blame not the heart, that in carelessness roves.*

Mr. Moore has a note to one of his Irish Melodies, which is so appropriate, that as I am sure I could never write any thing half so good as Mr. Moore, either in poetry or prose, I shall take the liberty to transcribe.

“ There are so many matter of fact people, who take such *jeux d'esprit* as this defence of inconstancy to be the actual and genuine sentiments of him who writes them, that they compel one, in self-defence, to be as matter of fact as themselves, and to remind them, that Democritus was not the worse physiologist for having playfully contended that snow was black, nor Erasmus

in any degree the less wise for having written an ingenious encomium on folly."

STANZA XLIV.

¹⁰ *And thou, pure spirit of a brighter sphere.*

I beg to disclaim all idea of competition with the many and excellent writers, who have written or rather published before me. These few lines were written before I had seen Lord Byron's stanzas, or the still superior production of Mr. Croly on the same subject.

STANZA XLVIII.

¹¹ *the grave*

Hath yet but half its ashes—

This expression occurs in the last letter of Rousseau's *Heloise*, where Clara so beautifully and pathetically laments the death of *Heloise*.

STANZA LIII.

¹² *Tempe of England!*

In a recent volume, on the *Wye Tour*, by the Rev. T. D. Fosbrooke, author of the ingenious and excellent work, entitled "*British Monachism*," the similarity of

the Wye scenery and the Grecian Tempe is strikingly illustrated.

STANZA LV.

¹³ *now gay,*
And frolicking in smiles, like youthful fair,
Now like some matron's stern commanding sway—

For these two similies, which are singularly appropriate, I am indebted to Mr. Fosbrooke's compendious little volume.

STANZA LVII.

¹⁴ *In perilous security—*

This seemingly paradoxical expression, will, I think, be fully justified to those, who have seen these little fishing shells.—As there may be some readers, who have not seen them, I subjoin the following very correct description of them.—“The natives of Hereford and Monmouthshires call it a *Thoracle* or *Truckle*—in some places it is called a *Coble*. It is a basket, shaped like the half of a walnut-shell, but shallower in proportion, and covered on the outside with a horse's hide, or with canvas (rendered impervious by some resinous compositions). It has a bench on the middle, and will just hold one per-

son, and is so light that the countrymen will carry it on their heads, like a hood, and so travel with a small paddle which serves for a stick, till they come to the river, and then they launch it and step in. There is a great difficulty in getting into one of these Truckles, for the instant you touch it with your foot, it flies from you ; and when you are in, the least inclination of the body will overset it. It is very diverting to see how upright a man is forced to sit in these vessels."

HEATH'S EXCURSION.

Mention of the Coracle, or vessels very similar, is made in Herodotus, Cæsar and Lucan.

STANZA LIX.

¹³ *He dies—and the skiff drags the dappl'd fool along.*

This is a sight that very frequently occurs in the magnificent woods of Lord Gage, reaching from the new Weir to the Doward. Government has bought these forests for the cultivation of Oak, and the expulsion of the Deer has been the first step of these new possessors.

Shakespeare has given the appellation of "dappled fools" to deer: thus, in "*As you like it*:"

Duke S. Come, shall we go and kill us venison?

And yet it irks me, the poor dappled fools.

ACT. II. SCENE I.

STANZA LXI.

¹⁶ *Pastime to penance—revelry to beads.*

I am afraid I can shew no mercy to the memory of these *bons-vivants*, and facts will readily confirm the accuracy of the above statement.

“A monk of Peterborough stole jewels, &c. to give them to women of the town.” GUNTON, 55.

“The Peterborough monks haunted a tavern near the house.” (Vid. GUNTON, 55.) and again, “*Tabernasque frequentando, ad matutinas cum fratribus sæpius non consurgendo.*” (MS. Ashmol. Mus. 1519. p. 70.)

The fondness of the monks, for hunting, is well known.—Draughts and chess too were favourite amusements.—“*Peeceavi in ludo taxillorum.*” (MS. Calig. A. 2. f. 223.)

“The monks think it lawful for to play when that the abbot bringeth them the dice.”

BARCLAY'S SHIP OF FOOL'S.

One William Gloucester, a monk, is described as staying out all night, “*bibendo et rixando.*” Giraldus says, “*Unum plerumque contingere solet, ut dum positionibus monachi immoderatis indulgent, ad rixas et pugnas persilientes cum ollis ipsis liquore plenis se invicem percutiunt.*”

BRIT. MONACH.

STANZA LXII.

¹⁷ *Cradock.*

Cradock Vreich Vras was prince of the country between the Severn and the Wye, and was said to be one of the knights of Arthur's round table. He tried the chastity of his wife by a mantle, which shrunk up if the lady was not virtuous. This most hazardous experiment however, to the unique honour of the lady, was better rewarded than it merited ; as it appeared, that, in spite of the general dissoluteness of Arthur's court, this lady Tegay ap Vron (what a sweet name for Love's lips to syllable!) had only offended in kissing Sir Cradock " beneath the green-wood tree," before the ties of matrimony had sanctioned Tegay's concessions. However Sir Cradock's impertinent curiosity has received a sufficient after-penalty, if we may credit Rabelais, who tells us that the employment of the knights of the round table is in ferrying souls over Styx, for which they receive a fillip on the nose, and a crust of mouldy bread.

The story of Cradock has given rise to one of Percy's ballads.

STANZA LXIII.

¹⁵ *There was a ring, which none but maids could wear—*

This ring was Canace's. Vide MILTON'S *IL PENSEROSO*.

“And who had Canace to wife

That own'd the virtuous ring.”

So Boiardo, *Orl. Inam.* l. 1. c. xiv. st. 49. Of Angelica's magic ring,

In bocca avea quell anel virtuoso.

STANZA LXIV.

¹⁹ *his purple feathery wings—*

Cupid is dressed by Spenser in a green vest : by Catullus in yellow,

Crocina candidus in tunicâ.

and by Sappho in purple.

STANZA LXVIII.

²⁰ *Smiling in all her brilliance on the stream,*

That frets with lustre—

The expression “fretting with lustre,” I have heard

objected to, but I am by no means prepared to give up my *pet* phrase. Whoever has seen, on a cloudless night, the moon's beam flickering on the waters, particularly on the river Wye, (on the banks of which these few stanzas were written) from its frequent shallowness of current, and constant interruption of hidden rock, will have perceived a more than rippling of the waters—almost, if I may be allowed to use the expression, a tossing of the wave, as if curvetting beneath its load of magnificence.

“Fret” is not of course to be taken in its ordinary and limited acceptation, but it also implies any visible and marked agitation. Addison, indeed, “on Italy,” has a sentence quite to the purpose: “Of this river the surface is covered with froth and bubbles, for it runs along upon the *fret*, and is still breaking against the stones that oppose its passage.” This is very much the character of the Wye, but I by no means wish to confine myself to that river. I have witnessed, or at least fancied I have witnessed, an almost equal appearance on the still and silent lakes of Windermere and Derwent-water. And if we take fret in its most probable derivation from *fretum*, (*vide* Johnson) the word assumes a peculiar appropriateness.

STANZA LXXI.

²¹*Fair as thou art,
Star of the Morn !*

This is the land of lovers, known afar,
And named the Evening and the Morning Star.

HOGG'S PILGRIMS OF THE SUN.

STANZA LXXV.

²² *Alas ! let holy men persuade—believe—*

This peopling of the stars with sinful mortal beings has become a fashionable mania since the publication of Dr. Chalmers's most eloquent sermons ; but without entering in a note into a discussion of this subject, I can only say, if he is right, " errare malle."

POEMS.

POEMS.

TO NAPOLEON.

—— And is the tide of battle o'er?
Blenched is the flush of victory?
Must Conquest's song be heard no more—
Death's wildest song of revelry?

Though gallant was thy latest bearing,
When Britain's war-cry burst on high,
Though gallant was thy soul of daring,
'Gainst Britain's bravest chivalry.

Yet what availed the peal of war,
Thy wonted name of victory?
Thy cowering eagle fled afar
From England's sons of liberty!

Ah! vainly sped the balls of Fate—
'Twas not thy destined bliss to die—
A darker doom must on thee wait,
 The deep'ning curse of Memory!

Thou, whom the morn with fond delight
Adored in scept' red majesty—
A fugitive, ere noon of night,
 In Frenzy's wildest agony.

Aye! many a glory's faded scene
May wring the blood-drop from thine eye—
To think on joys that *once* have been—
 The pride and pomp of Royalty!

Weep in thine isle thy lonely doom—
Be with thy joys thy crimes gone by—
Remorse will tinge with deeper gloom
 Her dark and sullen scenery.

And when Life's ebbing tide shall cease,
And hushed is Glory's ling'ring sigh,
The grave at length may lend its peace,
And shroud thy fallen dignity !

1816.



TO LORD BYRON.

Byron ! to whom the partial Muse has given
The grasp of Genius, and the fire of Heaven—
Who, like Prometheus, boldly soar'st on high
To seize with holier hand the flame of deathless Poesy :
Daring as he, who lashed o'er Heaven's plain
His father's steeds—then plunged amid the main—
Thou smil'st to see his boyhood's dazzled eye
Quail 'neath the circling blaze of Heaven's own min-
strealsy.

Whether by mountain's height, or torrent's roar,
Thou throw'st thy glance o'er Nature's wildest
store,

Or on thine own lov'd ocean stemm'st the tide,
The wave thy courser, and the storm thy pride,—
Oh ! how my soul would pant to follow from afar,
And snatch from thy bright galaxy one falling star.

ON THE STATUE OF NIOBE.

Lives there, whose soul, unblest by Pity's glow,
Ne'er beat responsive to the voice of Woe?
There let him turn, where still the sculptor's art
Pours the full tide of torture o'er the heart—
There let him view, where still th' unbending form
Writhes at each blow—yet bows not to the storm!
Sunk though that royal air, that glance of Pride,
Which towered o'er earth, and Heaven's dread wrath
defied—

Sunk though that brow of awe, and dimmed that eye,
Which beamed high scorn and heav'n-born majesty—
Still 'mid the wreck it seems as Memory stayed,
To tell how vast the pride, that could not fade.
Long o'er her soul that Pride had vainly striven
To hush the heart that bled, yet scoffed at Heaven;
Unmoved she saw the arrowy tempest speed—
Unmoved she saw her lessening offspring bleed—
Pang followed pang—and death succeeded death,
Yet Pride triumphant choked her gasping breath.—

Ev'n when she caught, as fast the life-blood flowed,
The last fond look expiring love bestowed,
Scornful she stood—nor tear nor sigh expressed
The throes that agonised the mother's breast.

* * * *

One lonely beam of fond Affection's care
Remained to shed its halo round Despair—
Instant the hope—her prayer might yet be heard—
One still was left—one, one might yet be spared,
Nature o'erflowing could not be repressed—
The mother's feelings burst at once confest.

* * * *

Too late to succour, yet too firm to yield,
One interposing arm her only shield,
Clasps to a mother's fond protecting side
The guiltless martyr of that mother's pride.
One humbly raised in trembling dread implores'
But this lone joy to bless her widowed hours ;
Spent on the prayer, and o'er her daughter's throes,
Life's chilling current to its fountain froze—
Just heard that daughter's last convulsive groan—
Saw her glazed eye—then hardened into stone !

Still o'er the sculptured form that look appears,
Which, while it pleads, of mercy yet despairs,—
That cold calm look of Agony sedate,
Unbent by Anguish, but o'erpowered by Fate !

THE HORSES OF LYSIPPUS.

Heard ye the shock that rent the startled world,²
As if all Nature from her base was hurled ?
The sea-god came—rushed Ocean's steeds to birth—
Mocked the mid-air—and grasped at once an earth !

Sublimely bold, the sculptor instant caught
The full effulgence of the Poet's thought—
Streamed the rich splendour on the artist's sight,
Then flashed on earth, a monument of light !
Astonished Sculpture paused in fond amaze—
Shrunk from its work—then turned again to gaze—
Well might that gaze pursue each heav'n-sprung steed
Whirling through boundless space with lightning-speed,
Rush through th' infinity of heaven's own clime,
Beyond the reach of Thought—the speed of Time—
Well might that gaze each swelling vein admire—
Neck clothed with thunder³—and the eye of fire,
As if their god had lent his own bright flame
To blaze for ever in immortal fame !
Well might ye claim a God's peculiar sway,
Celestial coursers of the God of Day !

Immortal steeds! your race of glory run,
Nigh had Ambition quenched that glory's sun;
The Hero's bust—Religion's mouldering fane
Tells but of Time's too desolating reign,
Afflicted Science mourns each wreck of taste,
And weeps in sadness o'er the lonely waste;
Still Sculpture's gem had scoffed the hand of Time,
For Mercy stayed each despot's soul of crime—
Exulting warfare stopped in mid career,
And lawless bandits learnt at last to spare.

Alas! to gaze upon thy glories, still
Undimmed, though tost at every despot's will,
Proudly ye have the storms of years defied—
The pledge of Conquest—yet the sport of pride,⁴
Still, ocean-like, on thy unyielding brass
Tempests and years fall harmless, as they pass.
But where are they—the gallant and the free,
Who bade thy glories emulate their Sea?
Where the proud Sons of War, whose dauntless course
Impelled their conquests with resistless force?—
Degraded Venice! on this lonely shore
Fame sits and weeps—thy days of pride are o'er.

Still thy steeds live to waft thee to renown—
No Venice springs to grasp the proffered crown :
Still thy steeds wave upon St. Mark's high dome—
Alas ! they wave but over Freedom's tomb !

THE ROSE.

No ! the Rose is too gaudy by far,
Too gaily it flaunts to the wind ;
'Twas the emblem of Havock and War,⁵
With tears and with mourning entwined :
Like the crimson of guilt is its flush,
Not the tint that meek Modesty wears,
Nor of Beauty that tremulous blush,
Which plays 'mid her smiles and her tears.

Yet its sweetness awhile may imprint
Some feeling of bliss on our hearts,
And when flown be each beauteous tint,
What a perfume its leaf still imparts !
And thus, when the garland of youth
Chill Time shall relentlessly sever,
The perfume of Love, and of Truth,
Dear Mary ! shall linger for ever.

LOVE AND FLORA.

“ Love is but a gentle creature,
“ Innocence in every feature,
 “ Flora ! kiss the boy !
“ Let his lips, my Flora, press thee,
“ Rose-leaves only round them twine ;
“ Let his infant arms caress thee,
“ Nestle there in Love’s own shrine :
“ Harm can never there distress thee,
 “ Flora, kiss the boy !

“ See ! his tiny arms implore thee,
“ Must he kneel in vain before thee ?
 “ Flora, kiss the boy !”
Sweetly smiling, faintly blushing,
Flora turned to where he sued,
And, each infant terror hushing,
Gave the kiss for which he wooed :
Then, to hide her own cheek’s flushing,
 Kiss’d again the boy !

RAIN AND SUNSHINE.

Why trickles, my Mary, this tear,
When Love looks so smilingly on,
And tenderness tries to endear
Those pleasures that still are thine own?
Our hearts are too youthful for care,
Our bosoms too bloomingly glow;
Nor will tears, believe me, repair
The beauty that's sullied by woe.

The rain-drop, that gleams on the rose,
'Tis true, like a brilliant appears,
Yet 'tis but the sunshine that throws
Such lustre from midst of its tears:
So, Mary, my love, though thine eye
Be dimmed by a tear-drop awhile,
Let sunshine this lesson supply
To borrow thy beams from a smile.

A FRAGMENT.

Her eye, where the tear,
Like the dew-drop clear,
Gleams bright as the star
In the heavens afar,
Sheds the brilliance of love,
Yet soft as the dove,
When he coos to his mate.
Oh ! the smiles on those lips !
Where Love nestles and sips
In that bower of bliss
Every day a fresh kiss.

There he sips and smiles.
So arch in his wiles,
Half pouting in fun :
And invites us to join
In his nectar divine,
Ere the rogue has done

But, rash youth, forbear !
'Tis the bee lingers there,
While the kiss you would quaff,
Young Cupid would laugh
At the mischief he'd done.

NOTES.

NOTES.

¹ *One humbly raised in trembling dread implores.*

The posture of the uplifted arm may be, it is true, the posture of defence, as well as of supplication, but I conceive the poet at liberty to use his own interpretation, when the subject will admit of a doubt, as in the present case.

² *Heard ye the shock that rent the startled world.*

Vide Homer's description of Neptune's ascent to earth :

.....three steps he only tooke—

CHAPMAN'S VERSION.

—to suppose that Lysippus inspired his imagination by a perusal of these magnificent lines of the Poet, is a very pardonable licence—and, at any rate, we have an instance in Bossuet, who, before he sat down to compose a sermon, read a chapter in the prophet Isaiah, and another in Rodriguez's tract on christian perfection. "The former," says Horne, "fired his genius, the latter filled his heart." Dominichino never offered to touch his pencil, till he found a kind of enthusiasm or inspiration upon him.

³ *Neck clothed with thunder—*

“Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?”

JOB.

⁴ *The pledge of conquest.*

The horses of Lysippus were supposed to be sure pledges of conquest and safety ; but they seem to have sadly belied their virtues. Byzantium, Venice, and “last not least,” France and Napoleon may rue the fatal dowry.

⁵ *'Twas the emblem of Harock and War.*

Alluding to the red and white roses of York and Lancaster.

THE END.

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